

VZCZCXRO8169

PP RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHGR RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHMT
RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHQU RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC
DE RUEHCV #1218 2601531
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 171531Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3711
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY

UNCLAS CARACAS 001218

SIPDIS

HQ SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
TREASURY FOR MKACZMAREK
NSC FOR DRESTREPO
NSC FOR LROSSELLO
USDOC FOR 4332 MAC/ITA/WH/JLAO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECIN](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EIND](#) [EINV](#) [ELAB](#) [EMIN](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#)

VE

SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE STRIKES VENEZUELA, BUT CHAVEZ DOESN'T
JUMP

11. (U) This information was previously reported in a
classified cable on September 14. This information is
unclassified.

12. (U) On September 12, a 6.2 magnitude earthquake struck
the coast of Venezuela at approximately 3:36 PM local time,
according to the Venezuelan Seismological Foundation
(FUNVISI). FUNVISI reported that the earthquake's epicenter
was 100 kilometers west of Caracas, off the coast of Carabobo
state. Francisco Garces, President of FUNVISI, told
reporters that geologists expect additional earthquakes in
the coming weeks as tectonic plates continue to adjust.

13. (U) Press reports indicate that the most extensive
damage occurred in Falcon state. At a press conference on
September 13, the National Director of Civil Protection, Luis
Diaz Curbelo, said that 15 people were injured in Falcon,
including one girl who jumped from her balcony. Interior
Minister Tarek El Aissami told the press that the quake
damaged 17 houses and two buildings there. Curbelo said
FUNVISI planned to inspect the safety of buildings affected
by the quake.

14. (U) Curbelo said no injuries had been reported in
Caracas, although the earthquake damaged the dome of the
National Pantheon. However, heavy rains in the capital on
the same day dumped 45 to 60 liters of water per square meter
on the city, according to newspaper reports, with flooding
blocking off several neighborhoods and leaving some residents
without water or electricity.

15. (U) During his Sunday "Hello, President" television and
radio program, President Hugo Chavez acknowledged the
strength of the earthquake and asked for God's continued
assistance. "I didn't jump from the balcony, but it moved
everything; the wood on the floor creaked," he said.

DUDDY